provisions of Drugs & Cosmetics Act and Rules, have been permitted to be imported.

Introduction of Vitamin 'A' by Multinational Corporation

3073. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Multi-National drug companies are trying to introduce synthetic vitamin 'A' nutritional supplements through our health programmes;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction to the strong objection of nutrition scientists; and

(c) whether these Multi-National Corporation have offered free stock of Vitamin 'A' for distribution in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D. K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a) to (c) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has been implementing a prophylaxis scheme for the prevention and control of blindness among children due to Vitamin 'A' deficiency. The National policy on management of Vitamin 'A' deficiency, evolved in consultation with the technical experts, provides for administration of synthetic Vitamin 'A' preparation to pre-school children at six monthly intervals.

Procurement of Vitamin 'A' solution, since the inception of the programme, has been done from indigenous firms.

Import of M.S.G.

3074. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that monosodium glutamate (MSG) banned in many countries is being freely imported and sold in retail in small packs popularly known and sold as Chinese salt;

(b) the quantity of MSG imported during the last three years indicating the value paid in foreign currency;

(c) what are the names of main importers and users in the country; and

(d) whether Government have any plans to stop imports in view of its dangers to human health, specially infants and mothers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D. K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a) to (c) In terms of Import and Export Policy, all items other than those covered by the Nagative list can be imported freely. As Mono Sodium Glutamate is not covered by the negative list, its import can be made freely.

No specific information about the quantity of Mono Sodium Glutamate imported, its value and the names of the importers and users in the country is available with this Ministry.

(d) As Mono Sodium Glutamate has been cleared as a safe food additive by FAO/WHO, there is no plan to stop its import at present.

Cholesterol effect on heart

3075. DR. SANJAYA SINH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the commonly held view that cholesterol has an adverse effect on the heart has been dismissed recently by the famous British Cardiologist, Dr. Donald N. Ross; and